



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: PLANNING AND BUILDING

File #: 18-837

Board Meeting Date: 9/4/2018

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Steve Monowitz, Community Development Director

Subject: Amend the Planning and Building Department's Planning Services Fee Schedule to authorize the waiver of Coastal Development Permit Exemption Fees for Qualifying Agricultural Projects.

County File Number: PLN 2018-00329

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution amending the Planning Services Fee Schedule to authorize the waiver of Coastal Development Permit Exemption (CDX) Fees for qualifying agricultural projects.

BACKGROUND:

The Planning and Building Department's current Planning Services Fee Schedule includes a fee of \$287 for a Coastal Development Permit Exemption (CDX). Pursuant to the County's Local Coastal Program, certain agricultural developments that are located in specified rural/agricultural areas of the Coastal Zone, deemed the Agricultural Development Categorical Exclusion Area, are eligible for a CDX, and do not need to obtain a Coastal Development Permit. The \$287 fee for a CDX covers staff's cost to analyze and document that a project qualifies for the CDX.

The County, in partnership with the San Mateo County Resources Conservation District, recently developed the Agricultural Ombudsman Program. The Program was created to help agricultural producers navigate permitting requirements. The Agricultural Ombudsman works closely with the County departments involved in agricultural development, including Planning and Building, Environmental Health Services, and Agriculture/Weights and Measures. The Agricultural Ombudsman educates County staff about agriculture in the County and identifies opportunities to streamline the permitting process.

DISCUSSION:

A. KEY ISSUES

1. Authority

County Ordinance 2193, adopted April 10, 1973, authorized the setting of Planning and Building Department fees by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

2. Description of Proposed CDX Fee Waiver

The Planning Services Fee Schedule sets standard fees for different types of permits based on the Department's average cost to process each type of permit. The schedule also includes a number of "notes" that provide further direction regarding when and how fees should be charged, and when fee caps or fee waivers or reductions may apply. The subject proposal would add a new provision to the fee schedule (Note No. 11), to read as follows:

The Community Development Director is authorized to waive the \$287 fee for a Coastal Development Permit Exemption (CDX) for qualifying projects located in the Agricultural Exclusion Area that qualify for a CDX pursuant to Zoning Regulation Section 6328.5 (e) and the associated Exemption/

Exclusion Worksheet when the County's Agricultural Ombudsman has been consulted on the project. Documentation verifying the Agricultural Ombudsman's involvement shall be submitted with the CDX application.

3. Analysis

The proposal to waive CDX fees for projects located in the Agricultural Exclusion Area that qualify for a CDX that also involve the Agricultural Ombudsman will directly reduce permitting costs agricultural producers and encourage them to work with the Agricultural Ombudsman, who can help them navigate the permitting process efficiently and learn the latest techniques in sustainable agriculture and agricultural best practices, improving economic and environmental outcomes.

B. REVIEWING AGENCIES/SHARED VISION

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

Approval of this proposed fee waiver contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 of a Livable and Environmentally Conscious Community because it will encourage sustainable agriculture practices and improve environmental outcomes.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff estimates that the proposed fee waiver will result in a reduction of approximately \$3,400 per year in fees collected by the Planning and Building Department. This estimate is based on a review of the CDXs issued over the last 3 years, during which time 12 CDXs per year were issued for projects within the Planned Agricultural District, which includes the Agricultural Development Categorical Exclusion Area. This is a small percentage of the planning permit fees collected per year, and will have a very minor impact on the Department's budget. It is anticipated that there will be no Net County Cost associated with this action.

ATTACHMENT:

A. Resolution amending the Planning Services Fee Schedule to authorize the waiver of CDX fees for qualifying agricultural projects.